



Communicating With Your Child

Give



Your Child Support

All Behavior is Communication:

When a child sends a message, it's important for the caregiver to respond—even if the child might not like the answer. The reply should show the caregiver heard the message. A helpful answer can give the child choices, explain when something might happen, or offer other ideas.

Try using these strategies throughout the day:

- Give options for what the child can do using positive words... --> ... "I know you want a cookie now. You can have an apple now and a cookie after dinner."
- Provide alternatives... ----> ... "I know you are angry that you can't jump on the couch. Let's put pillows on floor and jump on them."
- Provide choices... ----> ... "We hold hands in the parking lot. Do you want to hold my hand or my pocket?"
- Give reassurance... ----> ... "You are scared to sit on the potty. I will sit right here with you in case you need me."
- Establish routines... ----> ... "You are ready for dinner. Remember, first we wash our hands, then we eat."
- Praise small steps... ----> ... "You wanted juice and you remembered to say please. I will get that for you."



A response to the child's message is...

- Based on the child's interests
- Directly connected to the request
- Consistent and easy for the child to anticipate

When you show the child you understand the child's message and give a productive response the child feels heard and understood.



Family, Infant and Preschool Program of the J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center



NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES